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The counterpart:

Binationalism at the Volunteer level

By MEAD OVER

Those who have discussed binationalism in recent issues of THE VOLUNTEER appear to have assumed that integration of our hosts into our in-country structure can only occur at the administrative level. This straight-line thinking has led to full exposure of the pros and cons of host country nationals on Peace Corps staffs and of host country administrative control of Peace Corps programs.

However, the discussion also seems to have furthered a trend which Peace Corps, previously, has always been at pains to suppress: the natural tendency of all bureaucratic institutions to increasingly deflect attention, effort and money from the final product of the organization to the growth and perpetuation of its own bureaucracy. In the case of Peace Corps, the final product is volunteer service. Therefore, it would appear that discussions of binationalism which do not consider integration of the two nations at the Volunteer level are at worst irrelevant to all previously stated Peace Corps goals. At best these discussions become interesting but essentially divert extensions of principles to the staff level which had previously been applicable only to Volunteers.

It is true that bureaucratic belief in binationalism at the Volunteer level has long been demonstrated by Peace Corps Washington's insistence that rural development workers be assigned host country counterparts. Recently, however, the counterpart idea has lost popularity—especially among Volunteers. The term "counterpart" implies an equality of outlook as well as function; a mutual sharing of experience, knowledge and support; the existence of an empathetic relationship which should pay high dividends in friendship as well as in efficiency. The hope that the youth, amateurism, idealism and short-term commitment of the Volunteer would strike a responsive chord in the "counterpart," usually characterized by greater age, more training, professional status and accountability to the system, is an optimistic one at best. At worst the so-called "counterpart" is either the *patron* who receives the salary and the credit for what is entirely the Volunteer's work, or the obsequious and incompetent *main d'oeuvre,* who, like the old dog, refuses to learn even one new trick.

A misleading term

Volunteers must continue to seek close, cooperative work relationships with the professionals within the host country. Such an effort is inseparable from the commitment to animate the host country from the inside. But the term "counterpart" should be disassociated from this effort as inappropriate and misleading. The criteria by which the Peace Corps Volunteer is chosen and those operative in the case of his host country work-partner are so different as to make the term "counterpart" ludicrous in this context.

Why, on the other hand, has the counterpart idea been more successful at the staff level? Perhaps the selection criteria used are the beginning of an answer. Because staff positions are rather inflexible in their demands on the abilities of their occupants, the host country national would tend to be chosen, just as are the Americans, for his youth, leadership potential, dynamism and identification with the Peace Corps idea. Thus the nationals chosen have much in common already with their American work partners. Subsequently, the similarities of function, and thereby of outlook, act to produce the very counterpart relationship that is so elusive at the level of the Volunteer.

But this step towards binationalism *could* be achieved at the Volunteer level. Host country nationals *could* be found who would share the essential Peace Corps Volunteer attribute of having volunteered, as well as the secondary attributes of youth, idealism and impermanence of commitment. These real counterparts would frequently fulfill the Volunteers' expectations as the other half of an empathetic, effective, *binational* team of volunteer development workers.

In most countries these counterparts could be recruited from among the local population of high school graduates, so many of whom find no position waiting for them on graduation, by the local Peace Corps office with help from appropriate government organs. The government of the country would commit itself in some degree to furthering either the education or the career of each recruited national at the end of his two years with the Peace Corps. Training and selection of all counterparts would take place as part of the regular training program. Their function during

language training would be instruction (they would be less expensive than the present language instructors). They would prove particularly invaluable in an in-country training program centered on role-playing, wherein the counterparts would direct the Volunteers in the daily drama of the peasants' life. Counterparts and Volunteers would receive identical technical training. Cross-cultural training might include a period in an American urban ghetto, where the Volunteer could guide his counterpart and afterwards they would analyze their emotional and intellectual reactions.

Eventually those counterparts finally selected would be assigned with the Volunteers. The living allowances of most countries would be cut to avoid paying the untrained national more than his professional superiors. Following this procedure the Volunteer living allowance would be cut by as much as half in some countries (Upper Volta, for example), and the Volunteer would be forced to learn to live as his counterpart does. Other details would be worked out under the general principle that Volunteers and counterparts always be treated the same.

'Real' counterparts

I believe that a Peace Corps program involving these native counterpart Volunteers would demonstrate many advantages in the short run. First, training would be far more useful (and far less a camouflage for selection) if the trainees comprised citizens of the host country as well as Americans. Once the program arrives on site, the commitment of national personnel would further involve both the central government and its local extension in Peace Corps efforts. As a result, both Peace Corps Volunteers and Peace Corps counterparts might find more sympathetic ears for their problems and their brainstorms than most Peace Corps Volunteers now find outside the Peace Corps office. Also, the presence of a national in the same predicament as the Volunteer would help the latter to avoid that "we-they" attitude which appears with increasing frequency in response to Volunteer frustrations—especially as termination nears. There is even a pecuniary advantage; the extra costs of training more people would be more than offset by the living allowance reductions and the savings on language teachers.

It seems to me, however, that the long run advantage of adopting these *real* counterparts is even more striking. After several years a fund of host country nationals with volunteer service experience would result. Underdeveloped countries have a perenially insoluble problem in the gigantic rift between the peasant farmers and the educated elite. The "returned Peace Corps counterparts" could play an important part in their country's future by helping to bridge that gap. Indeed, these returned Peace Corps counterparts could well find themselves to be unique in their capacity to understand both sides of their country's problems. To the extent that Peace Corps is committed to the development of the people rather than the things of the host country, it should commit itself to providing voluntary service experience to host country nationals.

Peace Corps has always been a people agency, but the people who have the meaningful voluntary service experience are all Americans. In a further extension of peace Corps' long-standing policy of people development, in a continuation of the present trend towards binationalism, let's extend the Peace Corps service experience to the host country nationals.

Volunteer Mead Over works in well-digging and agricultural extension in Tenkodogo, Upper Volta.

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Peace Corps print

To review the Peace Corps newsletters and magazines produced overseas is to review a mixed bag—in format, tone, substance and frequency—of Volunteer effort.

Between 15 and 20 countries have been represented by these publications thus far in 1969, some of them on a consistent, monthly basis; others, as their mastheads state, appear "from time to time."

In certain instances the in-country Peace Corps staff reads the newsletter as freshly as the Volunteer "subscribers," never seeing it until it comes off the press or mimeograph machine. Other publications operate with editorial boards of Volunteers and staff reviewing the available copy. Some Peace Corps staffs sit right on top of the Volunteer writers and editors, and on occasion the heat felt by those editors is generated from the U.S. Embassy. The last editor of Bolivia's *Pues* resigned from the Peace Corps in connection with editorial problems which brought the Ambassador into the picture.

The form of a newsletter and its editorial objectives seem to evolve from the personalities of the Volunteers and staff in the country at any one time. And while most of the newsletters undergo innumerable changes and wind up making desperate appeals for contributions (characterized by a statement such as: "The success or failure of this newsletter rests with you"), a small number have had distinguished careers.

To mention a few:

- *Porvenir* in Colombia and *The Mayan* in Honduras, which consistently present a good coverage of Peace Corps news;
- *Sholuq Nameh* in Iran, which recently featured a 24-page collection of high-quality Volunteer photographs;
- *Yobosayo* in Korea, regularly filled with relevant, straightforward articles;
- *El Ecuador* in Ecuador, with its sophisticated, bilingual approach, and
- *Ang Boluntaryo,* one of the oldest, professional-looking Volunteer magazines, back in business in the Philippines after editorial problems closed it down at the end of 1968.

Many of the remaining newsletters make a living from:

- "How to make . . ." columns about flipcharts, flannel boards, and homemade fly swatters;
- Vocabulary lessons, local proverbs, and quizzes on history of the host country;
- Testing schedules, travel tips, and lists of stores and companies which offer Peace Corps discounts;
- Recipes (goatloaf, roast armadillo, iguana pie, mango mousse and finger paints), and
- Staff notices. ("Purchases of horses or saddles must first be approved by your area rep." Or, from a Peace Corps physician, "Okay, gang, get your asses in gear. Gamma gobulin shots will be administered in the first part of the month.")

At one time or another, practically every newsletter has run faithful Jerome Olds' notice of free subscriptions to *Compost Science* from Emmaus, Pa.

The lighter material aside, some of these overseas publications carry a number of outstanding evaluations and observations of the Peace Corps itself and some excellent cultural descriptions. This month *The Volunteer* presents a special section with articles from 1969 newsletters. For the most part, the selections represent Volunteers reflecting on the culture of their host countries and their place in it.

A day in t

By GEORGICAU

in the life....

EORGE CAUTHEN

The one road out of Hwa Am that looked like it ought to go somewhere didn't; and the other road turned out to be the one I would take to such magic places as Pae Jun, where U.S. soldiers wrote messages on the boulders with yellow paint bombs or Kun Chun, high in the collateral valley with the crooked pine trees and the thousand-meter gravel log glissade or Mul-Un, where people don't believe in DPT inoculation because it hurts. Or you can go that way to Sa-Buk and Ko-Han where the coal mines are.

My big wall is covered in 1:25,000-scale elevation relief maps complete with houses and swamps which I got across from the Foreigner's Supermarket, so I didn't need to go. I was able to see where the one road went and remark on its elevation above sea level if need be. In fact, I could probably have had my whole Peace Corps experience right there on that map. Put it down on the floor and use dice or a game of chance to distribute TB patients according to rates in the 1967 Korean TB Association Study, and then have all-time, all-star teams of public health heroes competing to cure them. Albert Schweitzer, Tom Dooley, Martin Arrowsmith, Louis Pasteur, Axel Munthe and Jonas Salk versus Jim Justice, Polly Bushey, Reuben Baybars, Doc Daneeka, Irving Polingumptewa and Penny Stella. Something like a J. Henry game played on a 1900 map of Eurasia.

But finally I went down the road to case for a sputum sampling campaign. For 10 kilometers it wound serpentinely and climbed, every rounded bend giving a dizzier vista of mountain tops beyond mountain tops and below the homes along a morosely puddling stream clogged with celery greens and fragments of clothes beaten apart by clubs. At the end of the valley it rose up and punched a notch in the ridgeline and got into the next township out of my jurisdiction.

After a while—it takes a while to cross a vista—I got to the notch where I left the road to get on the ridgeline. I climbed a 60-degree potato field and got into a Korean Conflict foxhole. From there I seemed to have tactical advantage over aggressors from either valley so I rested and watched some farmers flailing soya. Down would come the flail and two to three seconds later would come the fwop. I was trying to remember in the Boy Scout Manual how you can tell how far lightening is off, but it kept getting confused with telling time from crickets. I was sure one of the concepts applied, and a plane came over a few miles off. I've actually tried flailing since then and also something else which I think may have been winnowing. In the first, I flailed but in the second, I was the winnower. Harrowing experience, agriculture, and an occasion for much rice wine drinking.

Then a helicopter came over, miles off, followed by another a few minutes later. They were doing something which we call "recon strip search" at the War College. (I'm lying. I don't know what they call anything in war. I hate war.) Another flew over, and the last one flew right over so close I saw into its wingpits, but they made no sign they saw me. I later found out they were looking for the Ul-Chin infiltrators, but I haven't seen where they've found one yet with a helicopter. (Ha! Another mistake in war. I can't stand war.)

On up the ridge I came to the cross-country high powerline pylon that had been prominent on the skyline from five miles off. It was the first I'd ever had a close look at. Cross-country high powerlines are made entirely of 2½ x 2½ x ¼ angle iron, and the spans themselves are ⅝ twisted cable.

The next knoll was the highest on the ridge for miles, though I still can't find it on my maps. Do you remember where either the new Anglican Bishop Rutt in his book or Osgood in his told about an interesting way Koreans had of reverencing mountains, where they thought spirits dwelt? They also thought spirits lived up in trees. But whether they reverenced trees in just this peculiar way as well I don't remember reading any place in the book list Peace Corps first sent us back when we'd only just learned of our selection for training. Remember how magic Korea was back in those days? We should have all just bought 1:25,000-scale Army surplus maps of Korea and stayed at Ghost Ranch two years. Have a mind feast whereas now it is a form of mind-luncheon. The way Koreans reverenced mountains was not to defecate on them (actually you can say shit now in the *Yobosayo;* John Cushing did it twice, but I'm not going to, in order to preserve the spirit of what Dr. Osgood, whom I reverence, said).

On top of the highest knoll for miles around, in a slight depression possibly left from the last war, and having no particular reverence for mountains, I shit, and went home feeling good from my Peace Corps day.

—Yobosayo, Korea

The bus home

By KEVIN MURPHY

"When rape is inevitable," says the philosopher, "relax and enjoy it."

Hustling back the four kilometers to the bus stop from the village where I have just collected a gang of malaria-ridden blood samples, I anticipate, throat gone, the cola glass tinkling with suspect ice and the affectionate tug at my testicles awaiting me at the local tearoom. At the stop the last 10 kilometers stretch out into the heat and dust shaping a road that swims lost at the first bend; parallel trees running guidelines leaning with the hot wind to make tunnels. All green evaporated by sun, hills and fields luke into waves of phantom water, melting. Come on, bus, you're 15 minutes late.

Ancient road.

Horn sound.

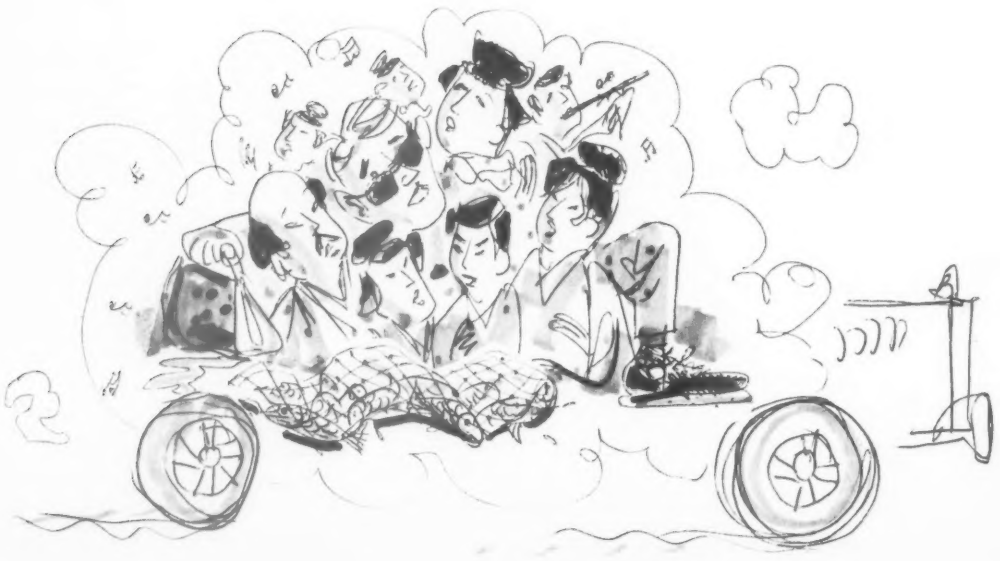
Man leap.

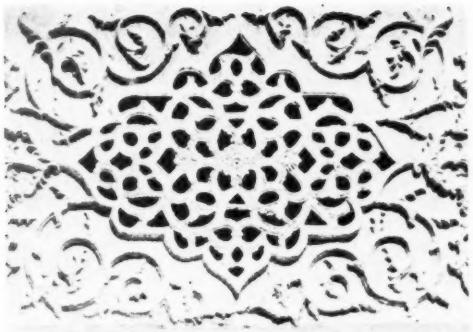
Tendons filling my John Wanamaker sneakers puked on the night before last, all legs head to feet, black bag straddling limbs akimbo, man masters machine in the 20-yard dash. Problems lining up like a ruler: alcohol bottle without the top threatening flood, slide case compact, mind intact, on time; away. One bend without incident, and the medicine spring looms before me with its throng of healthy drinkers. Everyone out for a quick gulp of the underground minerals balanced by a few chugs of the best the neighboring wine house has to offer.

I wait in the bus, poised like an Alaskan husky bringing the booze back to Nome. I am Fang; I kill with my teeth anyone who draws near my bag with the chattering slide case and topless alcohol. Oh Christ, here comes the school picnic, tumbling out of the wine house to the chaotic tunes of a harmonica and flute. Into the bus, around, under, over me, bodies the only reality. Too late to reach for my store-bought sunglasses. On with the subway face, eyes riveted to the barrel of the rifle strapped to the seat in front of me. Contorting my body in accordance with the Japanese hill-country practice of Nu-Jitsu, I disguise myself as the back seat of the bus. Alas! The size-12 sneakers refuse to contort; I am discovered; everyone's so happy I'm here. Motion. Din.

The bus fills the road like a snake gone wild, kicking out stones, trees, children, oxen with every twist and hole before us. One more stop stabs Physics by sucking still another body into the bus, this time a fisherman, his net still jumping and dripping with his catch, bathing my crushed bag filling with alcohol. The snake kicks, lives again, and the green tunnel splits with our terrible speed. The skylight opens, clouds enter, and with every bolt bursting loose, we are flying to the flute sounds of a melancholic drinking song; life mutely screaming its apocalypse of alcohol and music. In the terrific scramble of bolts and bodies, cosmic serenity approaches, oneness descends, I sing.

—Yobosayo, Korea





شلوغ نامه

The school principal

By JALLAL AL AHMAD

This is the first chapter of The School Principal, *a short novel by Jallal Al Ahmad, a leading writer in Iran. John Newton, a former Iran Volunteer who taught at the University in Mashad and became fluent in Farsi, has translated the opening chapters of this work to stimulate present Volunteers to acquaint themselves with more of Iran's contemporary literature. This story has been appearing in issues of* Sholuq Nameh, *the magazine of Volunteers in Iran. Newton said "Those of us who have spent some time in Iran will see many familiar faces moving about in these pages." He is assigned to the Peace Corps' Iran desk in Washington.*

As I passed through the door, cigarette in hand, I had to force myself to say "salaam." For no reason at all, I felt like acting tough. The Chief of Education granted me permission to sit, glanced for a lingering second at my hand, and went about finishing what he had been writing. He was just about to direct his attention my way when I slipped the copy of the order onto his desk. Neither of us said a word. He leafed through the order along with all of its attached papers, sucked in his chin, and then relaxed. With an air of serenity as if he were free of all anger, he said, "We have no openings, Agha."

Then, an outburst: "What's going on around here? Everyday they stick an order in somebody's hand and send him down to me! . . . Yesterday I told the Director General. . . ."

I didn't feel like listening to this nonsense so I cut him off.

"May I request that Your Excellency kindly put it in writing at the bottom of the sheet?"

At the same time I flicked my cigarette ashes into the gleaming ashtray on his desk. The desk top was immaculate. Just like a bridal suite. Everything in its place. Not one speck of dust. Only the ashes from my cigarette. Like spit in a freshly shaven face. . . . He picked up his pen, wrote something beneath the order, signed it and out I went. Finished.

I couldn't take much of this fellow. It was obvious from all his pretensions that he had just recently become Chief. He had a forced air of pomposity about him. He spoke slowly into your eyes. You would have thought that ears weren't necessary in order to hear him! I had laid out 150 tomans in the Central Personnel Department in order to get this paper signed. I had even brought recommendations. It was just two months now that I had been chasing around. My papers were absolutely impeccable! I knew that whether he liked it or not the matter was closed. He himself knew it too. Certainly he also realized that with all these protestations he had only made himself look more foolish. What was done was done.

All of this had come about because they had suggested in the Central Personnel Department that just for formality's sake I should take a copy of the order to show to the Chief. After all, who would be able to overrule an order from the Central Personnel Department? This was a Ministry and a Central Personnel Department! No joking matter. I had been certain that I wouldn't need recourse to these kinds of arguments. To my mind all the blame for this latest holdup could be directed at this damn cigarette which I had counted on paying for out of the overtime pay from my new job.

Naturally I was utterly nauseated with teaching. Ten years of teaching "alef," "beh," (Iranian a,b,c, . . .) and those blank, gaping faces of the people's children. All for the stupidest possible nonsense you can imagine . . . and "esteghna" is spelled with "ghain" and "esteghra" with "ghaf" and the Khorassani and the Hindi styles and the oldest poem in Dari and rhetorical devices like anadiplosis . . . and similar nonsense. I realized that I was turning into a donkey. One day I said to myself, "You should become a principal. A grade school principal!" I won't teach another class. My conscience will no longer be incessantly vacillating between giving out a 12 or a 14 and I won't need to give a 7 to every stupid idiot just so as to escape from wasting my time in the "tajdeed" re-examinations and thus preserve for myself the most delightful days of the whole vacation, the last days of summer. Here lay the root of my motivation. I went out and asked somebody with the inside dope, a go-between who could fix me up. He set things up with the Cen-

tral Personnel Department, extracted promises, made agreements, and organized a lobby of supporters. Then, one day, they gave me the address of a school to check out to see if it suited my fancy. And off I went.

The school was two stories high and newly built. It stood alone at the foot of the mountain facing the sun. Some rich education-loving ass had put up the building in the middle of his own property and placed it at the disposal of the Office of Education for 25 years in hopes that they would make a school out of it, that the area might be frequented, that a road might be pounded out, and that the whole scheme might grow and grow etc., etc., until the heart of every mommy and daddy would burn so much that they would all come out, buy up the land and build homes around the school so that their children wouldn't have to travel so far to get there! By that time his land would have shot up from one abbass per meter to 100 tomans! This character had even had his name tiled into the wall–with fine stylized writing on a blue background surrounded by decorative squiggles and swirls. But of course the school was named after him! No neighbors had been found yet to argue among themselves, pull out their favorite lines from Sa'adi and Baba Taher, and pound another page from the history of poets into the corner of the kuche wall.

The school's sign was a beauty, large and legible. From 150 meters away it screamed out the motto, "Power is ('Power is knowledge'–from Ferdowsi–the motto of the Iranian Ministry of Education) . . . whatever you want it to be!", with its lion standing up there on three legs trying to maintain his balance, with connected eyebrows, sword in hand and "Khanoom" sun riding piggyback.

Three stones away from the school on all sides was the desert–limitless, waterless and desolate. On the end facing north, a row of pines which had collapsed on top of each other could be seen over a mud garden wall, staining the sky with long dark spots. Certainly within 25 years this whole area would be filled with the blare of car horns, the commotion of children playing, beet sellers' shouts, newspaper sellers' rings, and cries of "I have fresh cucumbers." This fellow indeed had it made.

"You know perhaps he bought this whole thing for not more than 10 or 12 shahis. Maybe he even registered the land just as it is. Ummm?"

"Idiot, what's it to you? . . ."

Yes, sir. I had these very thoughts on that day I dropped in on the school incognito. But, in the end, I came to the conclusion that people do indeed have the right to feather their own nests. I said to myself, "If you're a man, use your brains and become the principal of this very school." And so I pursued the matter until it had reached this stage.

On the same day as my inspection tour I discovered that the former principal was in jail. Surely he had been a suspected Commie sympathizer and, just as surely, he was now atoning for sins which he had either never committed or "the blacksmith in Balkh had."

Among the paperweights hanging around the Chief of Education there wasn't a single soul who was prepared to exert the necessary effort to secure the principal's position and collect the subsequent raise. The job didn't have the special post allowance for out-of-the-way places. I had obtained this information from the Personnel Department.

Letter-written apologies hadn't become the fashion yet, so I had no reason to anticipate this fellow's early release from the clink. And I couldn't think of anyone else who would be all that excited about this place out in the middle of nowhere with its rugged winters and transportation problems. This put my mind at ease. And, aside from all this, the Central Personnel Department had agreed!

It's true, until the smell of money arose, they had found a few faults with me and some legal technicalities. For example, they all said that there has to be something in it for this guy that doesn't meet the eye. Why else would he, meaning me, want to be a grade school principal? According to their interpretations, I had to be out of my mind to elect to wash my hands of as honorable and as important a vocation as the teaching profession. Either that or else I was a pederast or some other kind of pervert. Stuff like that.

This was as far as my hopes had got until the go-between made it clear to me that I would have to "loosen a few purse strings." And so I did. In those days the monthly expense account of 150 tomans which went with the position of principal was no small piece of change which I could overlook. And if I did overlook it then what? I would have to return to those classes, those compositions, and those readings, the "Chahar Maghaleh" and the "Ghaboos Nameh," the school yearbook and all the rest of that malarky.

All of these factors motivated me to go straight back from the Chief of Education to the Central Personnel Department and on into the office of my "agent." I threw the copy of the order down in front of him, told him what had occurred, and walked out. Two days later when I returned, it was obvious that my guess had been correct. The Chief of Education had written, "I don't want any of these arrogant licensees who go cigarette in hand into any room they please." And my guy had answered, "Oh, never and absolutely not! . . . Such and such is this way and he's that way and indeed, he's altogether totally different than the others." On and on with this B.S. I was advised to put my mind at ease and go see the Chief again next Thursday . . . and I did.

This time he stood up to greet me. "Ey Agha . . . why didn't you tell me?" . . . etc., etc. After exchanging pleasantries and smiles, he ordered tea, complained about his staff, and, in his own words, "briefed" me on the current local situation. Then, he delivered me to the school in his own car, ordered the bell rung early, and, in the presence of all the teachers and the "nazem," went into a long oration about the wonderful characteristics of the new principal, meaning me. Then he left. And there I was, with one newly founded six-class grade school, one "nazem," 7 teachers, and 235 students. I had indeed become a genuine, bona fide grade school principal.

After this introductory chapter, the story details the anxieties of the school principal's job, with portraits of students, parents, local officials, teachers and school janitors. Instead of being the idyllic haven the principal imagined, the position turns out to be a nightmare of problems–one hundred times worse than teaching. Dozens of encounters harass the principal throughout 170 pages. Finally, when faced with a protest against him by irate parents, the school principal resigns his post in disgust.

He was there yesterday

By BOB KOMIVES

There is a method of carrying heavy loads in Guatemala which is primitive, but simple and efficient. The only piece of equipment is a loop of rope closed by a strip of leather or cloth. There are normally two strands of rope, and the strip is fashioned to fit comfortably across the top of the forehead. The loads can be a *quintal* of maize or a household of furniture and pots stacked five feet high and five feet wide. You see men carrying these loads up steep mountain roads where you don't know how long ago your bus passed through a town or how many rises and turns it will be to the next one. They learn the art with the smile and energetic spurts of a six-year-old boy. They continue resignedly well beyond the time when the wrinkles and posture would seem to say no.

There is also a primitive and simple method for weeding the corn. One needs only a machete and stick with part of a subordinate branch left as a hook at the end. The stick supports and removes the grass as the machete cuts it off at ground level. The stroke begins high, but an agile wrist and low profile convert it quickly to the horizontal—a total movement which conforms perfectly to the confines of the surrounding corn. The inherited short stature of the worker seems to be an answer to a plea from a bent-over body which would never straighten up if its hips were any higher.

There are few men who have daily weeded corn fields and carried these heavy loads who live long enough to be considered old in years. And when they do, their body still needs the food which only bending the back again will provide.

One such man can be seen every day in El Rosario. His constant companions are a machete and a young boy. I don't know where they live and usually don't see where they work. I see them on the road between. They come early to race their day's work against the sun's rise to oppressive heat. But they come later than most. They might leave the asphalt and start their four to eight kilometer trek on the dirt road at the same time as the other workers, but they are soon far behind.

The old man doesn't move too fast; and the young boy—maybe his grandson, his nephew or just his adopted friend—is in no hurry to go faster. His pace is youthful, but always respectfully a little behind the other. The boy has someone to follow, and the old man—he's never last.

It's hard to say whether it is the constant work with a machete or the carrying of heavy loads that bent his back and humped his shoulders—probably a lot of both. But as he walks along now his whole body bends forward such that his eyes focus on the ground just a couple of paces in front of his advancing feet. It is almost as if he were carrying a sack of corn on his tilted back, his head forward and down to receive the load. But he can't carry these loads anymore. The machete in one hand hangs heavily enough.

I saw them working in a field one day. He was swinging his machete. I only looked for a moment, probably because I didn't really believe it's possible. He swung his machete all that day and many days after, his friend working beside him. I would like to think that the boy does a little more than his share, but it's probably just the opposite.

They walk home looking no different than when they came. The boy does not require conversation of his old companion. The first time I passed, the sound of a gringo-ish "*Adiós*" caused him to turn his head to reply. Now salutations to me are the same as to the other familiar voices on the road, uttered quietly in the rhythm of the resigned pace. On occasion I have passed without saying anything—an irrational form of sympathy—but he passed giving no notice to me, maybe a little relieved that his attention was not diverted . . . his attention on the road just two paces away.

However, why should I walk by him in sympathy when his companion walks with him in respect. It takes a great man to have worked that hard for that long. Maybe, in reality, he can still carry a good-sized load on his back. And the boy, too, is looking just two paces ahead at the man he wants to emulate.

You see him everyday on the road to Rosario. At least he was there yesterday.

—En Cambio, Guatemala

Sambodi Niwasaya

By DICK & DIANA FARIS

Sambodi is a job. There are buildings to build, furniture to renovate, orthopedic devices to design. There is scurvy, malnutrition, epilepsy, scabies, fever and infection to treat. There is physical therapy, speech therapy, vocational therapy, special education and general education to arrange. There are field trips, administrative systems and vocational activities to organize. There is national awareness, understanding and assistance to mobilize. Job satisfaction awaits the tin-can shower idealist, the Schweitzerian organization man.

Sambodi is an education. There is unrelievable suffering, dehumanizing retardation, inevitable death. There is simple satisfaction, unqualified love, mad joy. There is an extra wide spectrum of human emotion to experience and internalize. Relevancy and involvement are available for members of the vicarious society, the post-unhappiness generation.

I take more than I give.

—Dick Faris

At the junction of the Matara and Udugama Roads in Magalle, there are two rambling, weathered, tiled-roof houses. They are Sambodi. Both old homes have cement floors and big, open squares with wide porches all around. Each is surrounded by spacious, walled lawns. The house in front is the boys'. It is connected to the girls' home behind by a long cement sidewalk lined with palm trees.

B. R. Dissanayake is the founder and chief financial supporter of Sambodi. For the extremely crippled, he had constructed four-wheeled platforms on which they go whizzing between the houses. As long as he is around, the 84 physically and mentally handicapped residents of Sambodi are in good hands. Unfortunately, other business keeps him very busy.

Mrs. Mouvlie Gunawardena, our matron, does a very competent job of keeping both homes in running order. She is assisted by two cooks, one vegetable slicer, two janitors, six female attendants, and one dhobi. She is often hampered, at least in her bookkeeping, by two Volunteers.

Most of the 47 boys in the front house are crippled from polio, muscular dystrophy, etc., and have no mental retardation at all. However, there are several boys who can walk but are "severely" mentally retarded. By "severely" I mean they cannot care for themselves and cannot be toilet trained. As they grow older and larger, their maintenance becomes more difficult. There are eight of these cases in the boys' home, and they are always found sitting on the back porch around the corner from the kitchen.

Mentally retarded children who are trainable I call "slightly" retarded. Usually they are a delightful bunch, having characteristics and habits distinctly their own and often quite amusing. Somadasa, one of these, greets all comers at the front door. He converses vividly, with hand motions only. Two other colorful characters are Sir John and Budhadasa. They are both around 20, and noted for their staggering walks and staggering speech. The youngest of this group is Wiraratna, age eight, who is also crippled with polio. He once asked me why I painted myself white. I explained that I was born that way, and he nodded sympathetically.

The youngest polio boys, 7 to 12, who could manage to get around, regardless of the distorted manner, were not given rolling carts; so, many went on all fours or on their hands, dragging their useless legs behind. They all looked like little monkeys, but their spirit to be mobile could not be denied. Thanks to 15 pairs of crutches given by the Ship Hope, and the brace making efforts of Dick and Volunteer Tom Jacobs, most of the monkeys are now upright. The crutches allowed seven more to attend the school near Sambodi. Gladstone, who walks on his hands, was too weak to use crutches. We hope to rig up a wheelchair so that he, too, can go back and forth to school.

The older polio boys, 12 to 27, though they have little formal education, are surprisingly talented. They build anything and everything and help with the cooking, cleaning and barbering. Their upper limbs are tremendously developed, and there are any number of jobs they could perform. While jobs are being found, they are certainly not idle at Sambodi.

I have never seen one of the boys, young or old, indulge in any self-pity. It is as if their isolation from normal society and lack of parental control has given them a self-sufficiency, dignity and strength of character which is not often apparent in physically perfect youth. There is a different quality about the Sambodi youth. Tom put it this way: "No matter what mood I'm in getting to Sambodi, after I get there, I feel good."

Their readiness to accept and assist anyone new amazes me. Our newest arrival is Chandrasena, aged 27. He has the emaciated body of one in whom polio has run its full course. His toothpick limbs and deformed spine seem barely able to support his normal size head, which appears grossly enlarged. After only one day at Sambodi, Chandrasena was nicknamed and being kidded just like the rest. One boy even gave up his cart to him.

We have several of Chandrasena's description. Often, several children of the same family are afflicted similarly. We have Nandakirthi and his little sister Malika. She is too weak to speak above a whisper, but Nandakirthi is our most scholarly member and is regarded as the sage of Sambodi. Another of this type is Paranawithana, also 27. He is the second loudest person here, his deep bass voice booming everywhere as he goes on his cart.

I had better get on to the girls' house. As you approach it, you would be met by the little people sitting on the porch. They range in age from two to six. There is club-footed Nil, big-headed Sunil, armless Kusumawathie, and Kanthi with the knot in the back of her skull and the faraway look.

Also there is Ranjini, a beautiful wisp of a child, who has never

walked because of rickets and scurvy.

All of these little ones are our solace and our joy. We spare no form of the ridiculous in amusing them.

The majority of the 37 in the girls' home are mentally retarded; however, there are several who are just crippled. Auntie Harriet, our oldest at 45, has crippling arthritis. Indrani and Seelawathi, both 19, are old polio cases. They get around on forearm crutches and do all of Sambodi's sewing. Rani and Sriyala received corrective surgery and, except for crooked calves, are quite normal.

We have 10 bedridden, "severely" retarded children in the girls' home. Because of spasticity and a tendency to lie curled up, most of these children resemble babies. Actually they are anywhere from 3 to 14 years old. Given intensive care and physical therapy, they might not be as totally dependent as they are.

Along with the babies, there is a group of walking "severely" retarded girls. They do not respond to affection and exist purely in worlds of their own. They, above all, need (or rather, needed) constant personal attention and encouragement. As they are institutionalized, they quickly forget the little they learned at home. Everyone tends to neglect them because getting any response seems so hopeless. But they come and stand around the table when they are hungry and they cry in pain. Perhaps there will be staff and time enough for them someday.

The oldest mentally retarded girls are only "slightly" so. Each is somewhat delightfully "mad" and their expressions and manner of speech are most amusing. I have a grand time screaming and playing with them. Unfortunately, being strong and healthy, most of the dirty work is pushed off on them. I fight this constantly, to no avail. After all, does it bother them? These big girls are invaluable to me and to the brain-damaged babies whom they cuddle and sing to as if they were their own. It is beautiful, really, the way they love them. The children's dependence and interaction with each other is the only advantage in the lack of staff at Sambodi.

Damika, 7, and Puspa, 10, are cerebral palsy children whom we take to the hospital three times a week for physical therapy. They are difficult to categorize. I know there is brain damage, but sometimes they are so smart. Puspa, an orphan, is very strong-willed and has taught herself to sew, feed and groom herself with her feet. Now we are trying to get her to use her hands, which are usually wound tightly back behind her neck. She can now stand and even if she doesn't walk before we leave, she will someday.

Damika is a much prettier child than Puspa, having no spastic facial expressions. Perhaps because of her parents' overindulgence, she is satisfied to sit in her little chair all day. She loves the things she accomplished in therapy, but she hasn't Puspa's will. We seriously wonder how we can leave these two.

It is difficult to measure the effect we are having or the progress the children are making, but one girl is very much changed. Chandrawathi is a slim, lovely girl of about 19. Her left leg has been amputated above the knee. When we arrived, we found her, head shaved, sitting in a chair day by day, her left fist constantly clinched. She was in the "no toilet training" class, which meant sleeping nude on the concrete floor with the others of that class. She had regressed as far as she had been neglected, which was drastically far.

Our first move was to get all of the "sitters" walking and out on the porch. This meant their "messes" spread over a much larger area, an inconvenience not immediately acceptable to the staff. Dick lengthened Chadrawathi's crutch, and right off she responded to our attention and affection. At first, she became naughty, holding food in her mouth until I was in spitting distance. Of course, I indulged her marvelous sense of humor. She flaunted my failure with her toilet training, chuckling and pointing to the urine on the floor. On some days she would talk, especially to Dick.

The attention we had time to give her did not extend into the night. If I forgot to walk her back to the dining area, she was dragged to it. Then every morning we had to look for her crutch. Last month a very lucky thing happened. The schoolchildren brought the mumps to Sambodi. Chandrawathi got it and was put in the isolation room with the "clean" girls. There she was given a bed, pillow and sheet, and she began using the toilet chair and bucket we put at the end of her bed.

One day Lalitha left a newspaper on her bed. When she went to take it, Chandrawathi said, "Leave that there, I'd like to read it." And now she reads, writes, sews, draws and talks to everyone. She also attends class at Sambodi. A young volunteer teacher, Miss Perera, comes every day. With no training in special education, she teaches in one class children from 5 to 27 years of age, each with varying degrees of learning ability. Miss Perera will never know how much she means to those children. Even after she has gone home, Chandrawathi stays in the classroom doing her homework. Yesterday, after I had finished piercing her ears, she told me she was going to practice opening that left hand.

Who knows how many others are mentally ill and not retarded? I welcome anyone's advice. The best way to get a true picture of Sambodi is to come and see the children. They are always at home.

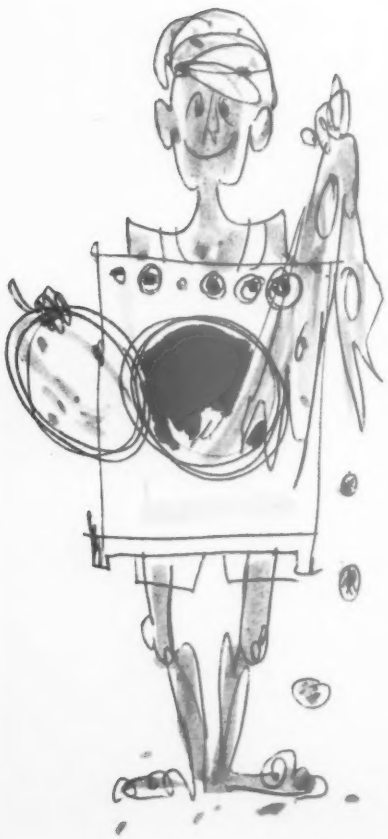
—Diana Faris
—Compost, Ceylon

the Dravidian

By MARJORIE GILBERT

YOUR DHOBI

'It's such a comfort to escape by bus and leave all the washing to us.'



A dhobi is a calculating, cunning and ingenious fellow who subtly devises ways to ruin your clothes. While washing your clothes he professionally removes all buttons and zippers, thus reducing you to a state of cleanly dependency.

As soon as you arrive in the village, with a bag full of clothes of definite shape, color and size, on whose surface buttons appear in tidy rows and whose openings and vents glide smoothly to a close on silent zippers, he has plans for you . . . plans that will eventually make a jumble of your plaids, stringy remnants of your undies, and permanently divorce your socks one from the other.

While you are still a novice in the village, your cook will bring this friend in dhobi's clothing to your home. "He will be glad," he chirps, "to wash your garments." He can hardly wait!

"Excellent," you think. "A cook and now a private laundry man. How splendid!" He counts the garments, and in neat rows of unreadable hieroglyphics he enters the result of his count on a small scrap of paper, adds a whimsical notation after each entry, jots down a finished price, and hands the unreadable result to you.

Soon in a tight little bundle, your precious Western clothes are whisked away to the Never-Never-Land-Of-Soiled-Clothes-Green-Water-and-Charcoal-Irons.

No one has even seen where *their* clothes are *washed*, however, *everyone* has seen where other Volunteers' clothes are laundered.

You try to think positive thoughts: spinning washers, gleaming laundromats, whirring dryers, snowy shirts flapping in the sun, stacks of laundry crisp from the electric mangle. You even remember the smell of freshly laundered sheets. But it's a bit different in Never-Never-Land.

Here the dhobi shares his tank or roadside pool with water buffalo, naked boys and other dhobis. Your green algae-encrusted garments are raised shoulder-high and smacked with great force against rocks of various shapes and sizes. After this punishment they are draped on prickly cactus, barbed-wire fences and jutting rocks. While drying in the scorching noon-day sun, a crow may use your slip for a landing field, a goat may nibble at your bra, or a sleepy scorpion may curl up in the pocket of your blouse.

Perhaps your garments have all been numbered 17 and have been joined by batches marked 23, 51, and 72. Dhobis use red pencils for this trick and place the numerals in the middle of your blouse, the collar of your shirt or the seat of your pants.

I have heard that when your clothes are returned and instead of all being marked 17, you can come up with a sequence of 17-18-19-20-21, you get to keep the freshly ironed and folded scorpion in your blouse pocket.

If your garments have been laundered in a private home, the stone on which your clothes are beaten may not have been so jagged and perhaps the water used is ladled from an open sewer.

Regardless of the method used in washing clothes, the pressing is accomplished in the same manner most everywhere. Several thicknesses of cloth are placed on a flat surface, and the iron, dating back to the last century, is loaded with hot charcoal, the top clamped on, and further destruction begins. Any buttons that have miraculously survived the beating are easily removed by this charcoal-eating monster, zippers allergic to heat are shriveled, collars scorched, sleeves accordion-pleated, and pleats laid flat.

In due time the dhobi returns with garments only faintly resembling those taken three or four days back. The dress *was* blue Madras. It has bled badly. The blouse *was* white not Indian red. The sox wouldn't fit my sister's youngest daughter; the slips, no straps, no lace. Total destruction. No buttons—crippled zippers—color where color wasn't—pale where color was.

I complain. The dhobi refers me to my slip of paper. I can't read it and now *he* remembers he can't read Tamil, though he claims to write it. The sum he asks doesn't agree with the price he quoted.

He smiles "Five rupees fifty paise." I scowl and give him five rupees and fifty paise.

"See you Thursday, madam," he says. And he departs.

—The Dravidian, India

Who's afraid of Mister?

By JOHN ROTHCHILD

Psychiatrist Eric Berne, in his book *Games People Play*, states that all human relations can be understood in terms of a complex set of games that we all play. Since relations between Peace Corps Volunteers and Ecuadorians can often, but not always, be classified as "human," I have tried to catalogue and learn to play the exciting gambits that take place every day outside the Mister's house.

I have classified these games as "Galos" because they are cross-cultural. They can conveniently be played by any two players, provided that one is a Mister and the other an Ecuadorian. No materials are necessary, except in some of the complex games, such as Dirty Capitalist and Che, where escalations often occur, which require shields, razor blades, karate, or dynamite. Luckily, the simple games are not so dangerous, and many of you have probably played them without realizing it.

In any case, following the maxim that knowledge is fun, I provide you with the following analysis in the hope that it will develop into more Laughs With Mister.

A Mister, for those uninitiated, is the son of a laboratory who has beady eyes and consumes vast quantities of tuna fish and petroleum. For the sake of simplicity, he will hereafter be referred to as Player 1. An Ecuadorian, who is anyone who wears Boston-made suits and goes to Annette Funicello movies, will be called Player 2. Groups will be referred to as Players 1 or Players 2.

I have divided the games into categories, depending on their complexity. The best way to enjoy is to start playing.

SIMPLE GAMES

(1) Espanitch

This is the easiest and most common game, played by any Player 1 who knows a few words in Spanish, and a Player 2 who knows some English. It is best played outside, with an audience present to provide heckling for the defeated player.

Game begins with Player 1 addressing Player 2 in Spanish. Player 2 follows, after wrinkling his brow as if he is making great efforts to understand, by answering in English. Game is continued in this manner until one of the players answers in his native tongue, and thus becomes the loser.

The game is complicated by two important countermoves.

a) **Countermove 1—Que Dice**

The success of this countermove depends on the opponent's confidence in speaking the foreign tongue. After Player 2 has answered Player 1 in English, Player 1 can use this countermove by saying "que dice" thus continuing the gambit. Player 2 can correspondingly counter with "what say." The process is usually repeated until somebody switches to Countermove 2.

b) **Countermove 2—Machinegun**

The first player to switch to machinegun must be sure that his opponent does not speak the foreign language well. For instance, Player 1 may at any time switch out of "que dice" and answer Player 2's "what say" by turning on a machinegun

burst of English, such as "youlousyfoolwhydoyouthinkyoucantalktomeinenglish when you dont." If Player 2 understands this, then Player 1 is defeated. If he does not, then his only defense is to switch to Ametralladora in Spanish, thus ending the game in a draw.

(2) **Nueva York**

This game is played between a newly-arrived Player 1 and a Player 2 who has just returned from the United States. Only materials necessary are a list of city names, memorized and ready to be used.

Game begins when Player 2 asks: "you know New York?"

If Player 1 answers "yes," then Player 2 goes on to other city names, "you know Los Angeles?", "you know Boston?", "you know Corn, Oklahoma?" until he finds one that Player 1 does not know. His final move is the remark: "I know more about the United States than you do."

Player 1, to avoid total defeat, is left with two choices.

(a) **Countermove 1—Never Heard Of It**

This tricky gambit can only be used if Player 2, by exhausting his list of cities, was forced to name some insignificant town. Player 1 can then remark: "I've been to all the *important* places in the United States, but I've never even heard of that place. Did you spend a lot of time there?"

Player 2 must be able to defend the unknown town's importance, or be beaten.

(b) **Countermove 2—Gee, You Do**

In this gambit, Player 1 admits to Player 2 that the latter knows more about the United States, handing him the victory in this battle with the hope of later besting him at Che or I Told You So.

This game can be played on Ecuadorians by Misters who have travelled extensively in Ecuador. Also, names of authors, movie stars, cars, or musicians can be substituted for cities, to diversify the above-mentioned form of Nueva York.

MORE COMPLICATED GAMES

These games take more skill. They can be played on any level, even diplomatic.

(1) **Awful**

Player 2 shakes his head slowly and tries to cry. He then says: "Awful. They killed Kennedy. Then Bobby. Then Martin what's his name. Now they riot in the streets. They smoke marijuana. They marry fat Greeks. They say dirty words. They don't go to church. They wear beads. Barbers are committing suicide. Awful."

This dramatic monologue is followed by a dirge-like silence. Player 1 must respond equally dramatically, or be beaten. His possible counterattacks include:

(a) **Reverse Awful**

Player 1 starts to cry. "Awful. Bad things in the United States. *Almost* as bad as Congressmen who shoot at each other, policemen who kill campesinos, rich men who don't pay taxes, and roads with pot holes in them. The United States is getting so bad I'd *almost* rather live in Ecuador."

This gambit, which is thrust home with the word "almost" usually evinces a full fight, in which Marx, the Bible, Henry Ford, The United Fruit Company, Che, Monroe and the Beatles are freely used. It may end in Player 1's expulsion, or in an escalation to Dirty Capitalist.

(b) **Yes, It's Awful**

In this move, Player 1 agrees with Awful, thus taking the implied sting out of the criticism. Player 2 must then think of more awful things, trying to force a stronger reaction from Player 1.

(2) **I Told You So**

Player 2 invites Player 1 to a dark, romantic bar. Player 2 proceeds to get drunk, order 15 Pilseners more, and produce the following monologue. "Most gringos are cold. They don't like our culture. They have no heart. But you (insert name of Player 1) are different. You are my friend. I like you."

Player 2 then reaches out and slobbers all over Player 1. This play goes on for several hours, until Player 1 cannot stand it any more and decides to leave. As he is ready to go home, Player 2 makes the second move. Grabbing Player 1 by the coat, he yells, "I told you so. All Americans are cold. I just wanted to have a little beer with you, and you want to get away. You robot. You pig. I hate you."

Player 1 has no escape from this clever gambit.

(3) **Cool**

In this reverse form of I Told You So, Players 2 make sure Players 1 are never invited to parties. At the parties, Players 2 can remark about how cold and egotistical Players 1 are for never coming to Ecuadorian parties.

(4) **Ugly Stick**

This is the most complex form of I Told You So. Player 2 gets drunk and says: "We Ecuadorians are awful, aren't we? So poor, so ignorant, so drunk. You Americans, you are always correct, developed, intelligent. Things are so bad here. Ugly us."

Player 1 usually falls into the countermove of Ugly You, agreeing with Player 2, which brings on I Told You So from the latter, who then complains about how Player 1 has a lousy attitude about his country.

The only safe counterattack is Ugly Me, in which Player 1 correspondingly criticizes race problems in the United States and the war in Vietnam. He should be careful only to criticize an equal amount as shown by his Ugly Stick opponent. Too much might be construed as brag-

ging. In Ugly Stick, you should never agree with the self-criticisms of your opponent.

(5) **The Only Good Indian Is A Dead Cholo** (variation 1 of **Ugly Stick**)

In this game, Player 2, who is usually well-off financially and from the city, criticizes Indians, rustic life and going barefoot as un-Ecuadorian. "We Ecuadorians," he says, "have the right to choose our own form of development, which means nice movie houses, cars and long landing strips for jet planes. You outsiders (referring to Player 1) have no right to work with un-Ecuadorian elements who want foreign values, such as equality or economic sufficiency. Ecuador is for Ecuadorians."

Player 1 has two possible gambits. He can bring a campesino friend into the conversation, who will then defend campesino rights as Ecuadorian, commonly called Take A Cholo To Lunch. Or, he can quote from Velasco speeches.

COMPLEX GAMES

Only the most daring should undertake these games. Some of them, such as International Gotcha, are played by nations who expropriate goods, followed by such responses as I'll Take My Toys And Go Home. Others, such as those below, can be easily played at home, and not necessarily at the international level.

(1) **Che**

This game is opened by Player 2 asking Player 1, "What do you think of Che (also Havana, Peking, or Moscow)"? Player 1 must quickly decide, by looking at his opponent, whether the latter is pro-Peking, Moscow, or Washington. The only way to do this is by age, since berets represent both Washington and Che. If Player 2 is under 17, he will probably be Peking. If he is 17-25, he will be Moscow, and over 25, he will undoubtedly be Washington. Player 1 must choose between the following gambits:

(a) **Yea, Che**

Player 1 counters with "Che was great" which is a good gambit but usually countered by You Guys Killed Him, entering the opponents into Dirty Capitalist. Also "Che was Great" can bring repercussions if opponent happens to be pro-Washington. This usually starts a phase of Gringo Hippie Communist, a sub-division of Dirty Capitalist, and sometimes ends in the expulsion of Player 1 from the country.

(b) **Che Was A Jerk**

This gambit is unacceptable at this time in Latin America.

(a) **Che May Have Been Great, But He Would Roll Over In His Grave**

A most effective argument for Player 1 to use with students. Player 1 praises Che, then becomes saddened because all of the Players 2 who are followers of Che are rich students and will be capitalist pigs in 5 years. Quoting Che on this point can be very effective, except when Players 2 counter by quoting Eisenhower as published in *Selecciones*.

(2) **Dirty Capitalist**

This is an all-purpose game used by Players 2, in groups or alone, to intimidate Players 1. It takes various forms, such as Fuera, or Gringo Hippie Communist, or the most recent and exciting 007 Karate Chop.

In all forms of this game, Player 1 is placed on a tightrope, in which either response he gives qualifies him as a Dirty Capitalist. Such games already described, such as Cool, fall into this category.

In this game, a Player 1 who makes money is a Dirty Capitalist. Conversely, a Player 1 who does not make money is either a bad Dirty Capitalist, or else a Lazy Rich Capitalist who doesn't have to work.

A Player 1 who works for a company is a Dirty Capitalist Pig, and one who wanders around alone is a Dirty Capitalist Revolutionary Communist Hippie. There are unlimited forms to this game, but we will describe only Fuera and 007 Karate Chop.

(a) **Fuera!**

Players 2 approach Player 1 on the street. Game opens by yelling "Fuera Los Yanquis." If Player 1 walks on, he is a cold robot. If he answers, he is imperialistically interfering. The only possible gambit left, is "Fuera Los Ecuatorianos" which usually leaves everybody laughing, except Player 1, who was probably serious.

(b) **007 Karate Chop**

Player 2, announcing that he knows Player 1 knows karate, forces the latter into a fight. If Player 1 wins, he is an aggressor and militant murderer. If he refuses to fight, he is a spy, hiding his karate skills under a Clark Kent disguise. The only way to beat 007 Karate Chop is to lose the fight, which may be the clue to the entire Peace Corps success in Ecuador.

If none of these games seems interesting, there is always the ultimate weapon at the disposal of any Player 1. And I don't need to explain how you play 10 o'clock Braniff.

—El Ecuador, Ecuador

By GEORGE CONK

What kind of peace is this?

Inherent in the few short lines of this recent ad (right) for the Peace Corps are, I think, many of the problems of Peace Corps—problems in its theory of what it is doing, problems in its rhetoric.

First of all, the tone: "The Peace Corps doesn't shout, 'Come, make peace.'"—one of the most outrageously proud statements I've read in a long time, just stuffed full of self-congratulation. "The Peace Corps has no delusions of grandeur"—Right, Charlie. "You can say anything you want about the Peace Corps. That it's just do-gooders. That it doesn't help peace. That it hasn't made any difference." In other words, we are already so sure of ourselves, we glow in the dark.

Second, the work involved, what you'd be doing over there. Again outrageously put: ". . . if you could enjoy feeding children. (How can you fight Motherhood.) Or repairing a tractor. Or teaching birth control. Or building a school house." Warm, womby feeling seeping in all over, roses and lollipops, little *non-white* children loving you to death. So romantic, as if the problems of the third world consisted of such simple things as child feeding, tractors, and little red schoolhouses alone. No mention of corruption, political revolution, misery, bureaucracy, and the fact that Peace Corps in its essence works within the established system and necessarily fosters or supports the evils of the system.

"It's for someone who would rather do something. Anything." Wheeeee! Freelancing!!! Me out there saving the world!

No mention of where you would be going—what kind of country, Asian, African, Latin American. No mention of the fact that they could be different—places where people don't see things in terms of U.S. and outside the U.S., where the entire third world just runs together in one big mass of delicious brown skin with big white eyes sticking out waiting for redemption.

Finally, "There are enough people who come out of the Peace Corps with things they've learned they can't forget. Good things." What about what you've done for the country you have so presumptuously tried to serve for two years. What did they think? Breathed a sigh of relief when you left, did they? Hated the supervisor's guts, didn't you. . . .

At once echoing the smug sophistication of a "Villager" dress ad in *The New Yorker*, and the holier-than-thou, WASP, you-don't-know-because-you-haven't-tried, Ben Franklin, Wild West, frontier ethic, the ad aims at the student radicals and would-be student radicals of the campuses. (A government organization trying to eliminate its opposition maybe?) The attempt is rather ludicrous since nearly all student radicals have come or are coming to the conclusion that government of any sort is not to be cooperated with, and that the action is definitely not in Nagpur or any other burg on the wrong side of the world. Either Peace Corps is naive, or it is going after the not-so-hard-core disaffected. Both are true; perhaps dishonest would be a better term than naive.

Eight years ago, the Peace Corps was *the* thing, the avant-garde. In those eight years, the avant-garde has made the great trek leftward, leaving Peace Corps there, or even watching it move rightward by virtue of its very existence. Somewhat like an abandoned lover, the organization has reacted a bit schizophrenically. While trying to prove it was right in establishing itself, in existing, it has also tried to pick up the rhetoric of the far left, the disruptive left, the hippies, SDS, etc. We use terms like "doing our own thing," "love" in the same sentence with "host country national," "termination in the field," and other such leaden bureaucratic terms. Every director, directive and memo is haunted by the ghost of Christmas past—the glories of Kennedy and the early sixties. We must be cute, open, belittle other bureaucracies, recruit the radicals, and deprecate all who call the Peace Corps the Establishment.

Face it, Charlie, the Peace Corps *is* the Establishment. The final proof is that no one feels threatened by Peace Corps; it can be shown to Senators, who will then make speeches on the Senate floor. We aren't the military-industrial complex either, but we are there to balance off the nastiness of that complex, and we are only there because that complex wants us to be.

We are through and through a bureaucracy—an organization with all the mind-boggling problems of a bureaucracy with a 25,000-mile line of communication. From the day you fill out the 16-page application to the completion of service conference, you are doing the bureaucrat's thing.

Peace Corps, also, if it is at all serious about itself, is simply an organization to serve the third world. A Volunteer doesn't teach family planning; he teaches Indians or Peruvians or Tanzanians about family planning. The latter emphasis is too often lacking. In fact the element of self-enrichment for the Americans has become so predominant in the rhetoric that I would like to see it wiped out altogether. It is obvious that the Volunteer will have a fantastic experience. We forget how outrageously proud it is to send Volunteers to someone else's country with minimal language ability to work at all. I'm afraid only Americans would have the gall to try.

The job—the nemesis of Peace Corps! Why? Because of the discrepancy between the dream and the reality. The dream—the Supervolun-

teer out there creating, doing his thing, posing for all those warm, touching pictures that appear every month in THE VOLUNTEER. The reality—at worst, one Supervol and ten bombs; at best, one Supervol and ten plodders. The discrepancy is the key to the whole balled-up organization, the whole balled-up rhetoric of attitude change, job situation, openness and love. Look at the words—attitude change—the unchallenged end, the purist goal of the organization. Its recent roots are in the liberal sociological literature of development, the sacred opposition to the "technological way" of AID. But its roots go back further to re-echo the nineteenth century, Protestant justification of poverty: "A man is poor because he is morally deficient. To improve him you must give him morality, the word." The world of Dickens, the WCTU, the missionaries. Not at all the world of Marx: "The worker is a decent human being. He has been victimized by man and society." Listen to Peace Corps: "The real change is changing someone's mind, making them aware, self-sufficient, opening them up." A pinch of existentialism, but never the realization that the peasant is being screwed to the wall, that revolution is a large possibility. The Peace Corps preaches awareness, but only up to a point—thus the essentially conservative cast of the organization, why Nixon can love us.

But the conflict, the dialectic. The American WASP ethic, i.e. the American ethic because it overruns us all, also demands performance, accomplishment, tangible results. The Calvinist could never know his predetermined fate; he could only work like hell and pray that he was somehow madly in tune with himself. The organization must produce—because production is one of the strongest strings twanging in the American gut, and also incidentally because the host country logically demands some small results from this most innocuous branch of American imperialism. And here is the conflict. The hippies have decreed that love, doing one's own thing, making your own peace, are outlandishly, disruptively unproductive. "Production" and "doing your own thing," the terms, lead not only to conflict, but to confusion, apologies, guilt pangs, and downright schizophrenia in those who would seek to unite the two. The New Left, turning on the organization that has so glibly picked up its rhetoric, hurls its most contemptuous epithets.

I have an obvious bias. But at this point I would rather make a small plea only: The Peace Corps must face its own rhetoric, face it seriously and ask whether it is true to the situation that exists, whether it is true to the situation that it wants to exist. It must ask what it means to "make your own peace" at all.

George Conk and his wife, Margo, have been working for a year and a half in a small town outside Bombay. She works in a nutrition project, and Conk, who spent a year in the same project, now works in the sales department of a government bacon factory and slaughterhouse.

Make Your Own Peace

You can say anything you want about the world. You can say it's beyond help. That man is more evil than good. That you never asked for the world you got. And you could be right. You can say anything you want about the Peace Corps. That it's just do-gooders. That it doesn't help peace. That it hasn't made any difference. The Peace Corps isn't disagreeing. That's not what it's about. The Peace Corps doesn't shout, "Come make peace." Peace doesn't come that easily. It's more of a separate peace. Maybe yours. No banners. No bands. No medals. The Peace Corps might be for you if you could enjoy feeding children. Or repairing a tractor. Or teaching birth control. Or building a schoolhouse. Even if no one ends up using it. (Don't think it hasn't happened.) The Peace Corps has no delusions of grandeur. Ask anyone who's been in it. But there are enough people who come out of the Peace Corps with things they've learned they can't forget. Good things. There are more ways than you can find to help the world. The Peace Corps is just one way. It's for someone who would rather do something. Anything. Instead of nothing. It could be your way. Write The Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525.

ADVERTISING CONTRIBUTED FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

Old style training camps close

They're closing the Peace Corps "boot camp."

The two-part training center in the forest south of Arecibo, Puerto Rico, is phasing out in favor of a new center in Ponce, the island's second largest city.

The demise of the camps—Crozier and Radley—may be lamented by many of the 10,000 trainees who have passed through them, but it says something about the maturation of the Peace Corps.

Established in 1961, the first camp was called Rio Abajo and renamed for Dag Hammarskjold after he died in a plane crash during his service as Secretary General of the UN. Camp Hammarskjold became Camp Crozier and when the second site opened up, it was named Camp Radley after Colombia Volunteers David Crozier and Lawrence Radley died in a plane accident in 1962, the first Volunteers to die during Peace Corps service.

In its earliest years, this isolated training center embodied part of the "new frontier" concept and charisma of Peace Corps, namely outward bound training stressing physical fitness and survival techniques as a means of building confidence. But by 1964, rappeling over dams and conquering the rope and rubber tire obstacle courses strung in the trees was passé.

As the field began to request more specific skill training and Peace Corps found the universities many times unable to respond, Crozier and Radley adopted the "in-house center" concept, providing practical experience and a setting in which the trainee could acquire the perspective to assess himself-in terms of his future assignment overseas.

Eventually, the isolated rain forest location was seen as a drawback for a number of reasons: lack of community contact, creation of dependencies among staff and trainees that were unrealistic for overseas service, and the fact that language motivation and cultural immersion had to be manufactured. The high staff turnover (attributed in part to lack of privacy), absence of commercial transportation, undependable utilities and maintenance problems resulted in Crozier and Radley being a "high-cost center."

Once the training center moves to Ponce, trainees will practice Spanish with their host families. In this early Peace Corps photo, trainees headed for Asia study language in a tent classroom at the isolated camp near Arecibo.

In this UPI photo taken in late 1961, a trainee completes a phase of outward bound training at the Puerto Rican camp.

In September, 1968, the training center staff began to study alternatives. In October, they met with Peace Corps personnel from Washington and Central America (where the bulk of the Puerto Rico trainees go). A pilot effort was run during that time with a Peru teacher training project in Ponce. The trainees lived with families and met together only for language and to review their progress in teaching. Peace Corps was well satisfied with the results.

Last January, the study group recommended that the training center "should concentrate on certain defined training objectives and have an organic flexibility which allows it to change style and shape as it matures and gains experience."

The choice for the move, Ponce, is similar in appearance and environment to many cities in Central and South America, according to Latin America Training Director Antonio Duran. It will furnish cultural immersion for trainees—who will not live at the center but with Ponce families—and adequate resources to the center and its staff. Duran said the long-sought opportunity to take advantage of Puerto Rico's technical resources will be possible in Ponce where a large concentration of government agencies and private specialists are clustered.

Camp Radley is closed now and Crozier will be by January, 1970. The first training group to go to Ponce officially will be Peru education at the end of the summer. Eventually training at the new center will consist of an eight-week cycle in language, cross cultural and interpersonal skills. (The trainees will commute there from their individual living sites.) Technical skill tracks will be taught in country or by an outside contractor in Puerto Rico or elsewhere.

The Ponce site, known as the Larrain Center, is a Spanish style building in the center of the city. The present owner, Catholic University, has used it to train priests and lay people bound for work in Latin America. With renovation, it will accommodate instructional facilities for 120 trainees and could handle 550 trainees a year.

Tape-slide bank open

Returned Volunteers in several parts of the country are contributing to an effort to supply U.S. high schools with tape recordings and slides about the foreign countries in which they have worked.

The Peace Corps regional recruiting office in Chicago is one place where the project is underway, seeking to tell aspects of life which the textbooks leave out—insights into family and school life, customs, styles and teenagers' daily routines.

Deputy office director, Mrs. Pam McHugh, said that without such an aid, teachers have a difficult time including anything of the human element in teaching about Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Some returned Volunteers have included music on their tapes and sent accompanying slides. Host country national recruiters have made tapes and Volunteers currently in service overseas are invited to contribute to the resource bank.

Arrangements have been made to reproduce slides and send blank tapes to any interested party or reimburse him for a tape of his own. It is hoped that a good-sized bank of tapes and slides will be ready for the coming school year. Anyone wishing to contribute should contact Mrs. McHugh at the Peace Corps office, Rm. 1008, 536 So. Clark St., Chicago, Ill., 60605.

The School Partnership Program out of the Washington Peace Corps office also develops cultural slide and tape shows for loan to schools and other groups. Peace Corps will pay for any materials accepted for use in this way.

Foreign volunteer directors meet

At Director Joe Blatchford's invitation, seven directors of foreign volunteer-sending organizations met in Washington in late June to discuss future steps for the U.S. Peace Corps.

The four-day conference was organized by the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service (ISVS), a type of clearinghouse for all major volunteer organizations. The meeting was part of Blatchford's attempt to seek advice about Peace Corps plans and programs from knowledgeable persons outside the agency. Volunteer organizations from Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Indonesia and Argentina were represented.

The group discussed many aspects of voluntarism, including domestic programs, technical skills, alternatives to military service, volunteer decision-making, phasing out programs, international cooperation, and the role of the returned Volunteer.

Letters *to the Volunteer*

Ask no favors

To The Volunteer:

I am a black Volunteer and would like to see more blacks in Peace Corps; but I don't want to see an increase because blacks are suddenly given a lot of breaks. Many blacks have hang-ups and feel that the world is indebted to them. No! Come join Peace Corps, but only if you can qualify and possess the inclination to serve. Don't look for special favors.

Black Americans who suddenly begin identifying themselves with Africa should be aware of her needs. They should be willing to contribute something to her in the name of peace, brotherhood and progress. Is a two-year tour too much to be donated?

Vernon L. Washington
Leribe, Lesotho

Distate for edicts

To The Volunteer:

I want to comment on the new directives by Director Blatchford.

I can understand that staff would like to reduce its administrative burden, but I don't think that a lump sum which includes all living expenses or the limit of baggage to 80 pounds per Volunteer is a good idea.

How is the new Volunteer supposed to know if and how to purchase such costly items as motorbikes or refrigerators? Perhaps one Volunteer sells them to the next. In any case, I was happy to settle into a house which already had dishes, pots and pans, etc., because I had never set up a kitchen in the U.S.

Truthfully, I don't think my buying the little that was available in Togo would have cemented me in with the local population, and the items supplied were serviceable—nothing to incite Togolese envy—and were bought with U.S. dollars.

I know that if I were a staff member, I wouldn't like to handle the Volunteers' luggage; but on the other hand, I don't see how an 80-pound limit will suffice for two years. It severely limits a Volunteer's basic equipment and keeps him from being an avid African art collector, like myself. I used up my 250-pound sea freight allowance upon leaving Togo. I happened to like local wood sculpture and weaving, and I got to know the artisans as well as contribute to their incomes.

The departure of the booklocker also strikes me as odd. I never agreed with Volunteers who sat home and read instead of getting out and working with the people, but it was nice to have a supply of reference and fiction books on hand both for myself and for my students. Even though the new, adjusted allowance is supposed to include money for books, where is the Volunteer to obtain them in a non-English speaking country?

Going back to Togo again, it was our director who decided such matters as vehicle policy and use of the hostel, and I think he was right. I distrust Peace Corps-wide edicts which emanate from Washington. When all hostels were ordered closed, that might have worked for South America, but not for West Africa. Togo's was finally reopened. But why make the blanket decision in the first place?

Mike Saks
Former Volunteer
Kinshasa, Congo

In defense of BAGs

To The Volunteer:

We health Volunteers in Malawi have heard some reports about changing policies in Peace Corps Washington. Some of these reports have disturbed us—in particular, proposed policies on reducing the role of B.A. generalists and recruiting more technicians at higher pay.

We feel that the B.A. generalist's role is essential in Peace Corps. In our health program we have found a non-technical background very important. Most of our work is done at the village level where we must be very adaptable and willing to learn from the villagers. If we entered this job with a high technical background, we believe we would be less able to learn and adapt, and thus less able to do a good job.

If technicians are to be recruited, they should be recruited as Volunteers with the same low pay scale as at present. This would ensure their enthusiasm and willingness to learn and adapt at the local level. We believe our experience of the effectiveness of non-technical Volunteers here in Malawi is applicable to much more of Peace Corps, and we strongly urge the retention of the low paid, non-technical Volunteer.

We believe that an essential part of Peace Corps is the interpersonal encounter and communication that occurs on a person-to-person level. We think an over-concern with high technical skills and high pay may lead to a reduction in this interpersonal contact. We are very much concerned with concepts such as "peace" and "friendship," and we want to continue to be able to serve these ideals through the Peace Corps.

Signed by 33 Volunteers
Blantyre, Malawi

Making theory work

To The Volunteer:

Reference is made to the article by Deborah Jones, "Looking at the trainee: '68 model" (May Volunteer). This interesting article contained some important ideas, but as is frequently the case when good ideas appear, there is no existing mechanism through which such ideas can materialize.

The section of the article pertaining to technical studies states that such training should take into account the *individual* experience and needs of the trainees.

I am one of several people involved with planning the agriculture portion of a summer training program in the Marshall Islands, Micronesia. Aware of the importance of the above point we attempted to obtain information on experiential and educational backgrounds of the approximately 20 trainees. Such information was not

available from the director of the training program, nor from Peace Corps Marshalls nor from Peace Corps Micronesia. I wrote a letter to the person in Washington who was supposed to have recruited the agriculture trainees requesting some information on their backgrounds so that a more pertinent training program might have been formulated. With two weeks remaining before the trainees were to arrive, no word had been received.

As one training coordinator stated in the preface to Miss Jones' article: "The report is theological, rather than operational. And we already have a lot of theologians in the Peace Corps." Amen.

LEWIS GLENN
Majuro, Marshall Islands

Mistaken identity

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

There is just one mistake in "Your actions speak louder . . ." (June VOLUNTEER). My original article stated "*we* identify the channels of nonverbal communication as the kinesic, proxemic, chronemic, oculesic and haptic". It was changed to read "*I* have identified five such channels."

None of these has been identified by me. "Proxemics" is Ed Hall's term used in *The Silent Language* and *The Hidden Dimension*; "kinesics" was first systematized by Ray Birdwhistle; "chronemics" is a term borrowed from Don Larson, though for him meaning something different; "haptics" is being studied by Sidney Jourard; "oculesics" is a term coined by my wife, LaDena, although the area is being investigated by Ed Hall and many others.

My only claim to these areas is applying a training technique to sensitize Americans to these channels during intercultural communications. Anyone who is knowledgeable about this field knows that I have not identified them.

MELVIN SCHNAPPER
Washington, D.C.

Peace Corps amnesia

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

There is an inaccuracy in the Deborah Jones' article (June VOLUNTEER) on the language materials for the Peru co-op program. Special auditory training tapes and cross cultural situations were worked out by the assistant language coordinator; but the topical materials worked out in the form of structure drills and dialogues were developed by a consultant, a returned Volunteer from Peru experienced in writing materials and in teacher training, under the direction of the center's language director, Anna Acitelli. (Language materials are not something that can be whipped up between programs and polished up in the midst of HILT.)

For some reason, the inaccuracy is related in my mind to the lack of "memory" of the Peace Corps, even in these computer days. There apparently is no way the Peace Corps can find out what returned Volunteer has what skill that might be available for some specific program. Certain well-publicized names are remembered; but under a specific program need could the Peace Corps come up with the name of, say, Sue Kirsh Knox who did occupational therapy work with retarded children in Arequipa and now is a graduate occupational therapist?

And talking of no memory and forever rediscovering the wheel—now that Acitelli has gone, I understand that center has abandoned the integrated materials approach and returned to a textbook-centered program.

ELIZABETH BARNHART
Former Volunteer
Los Angeles

We can be both

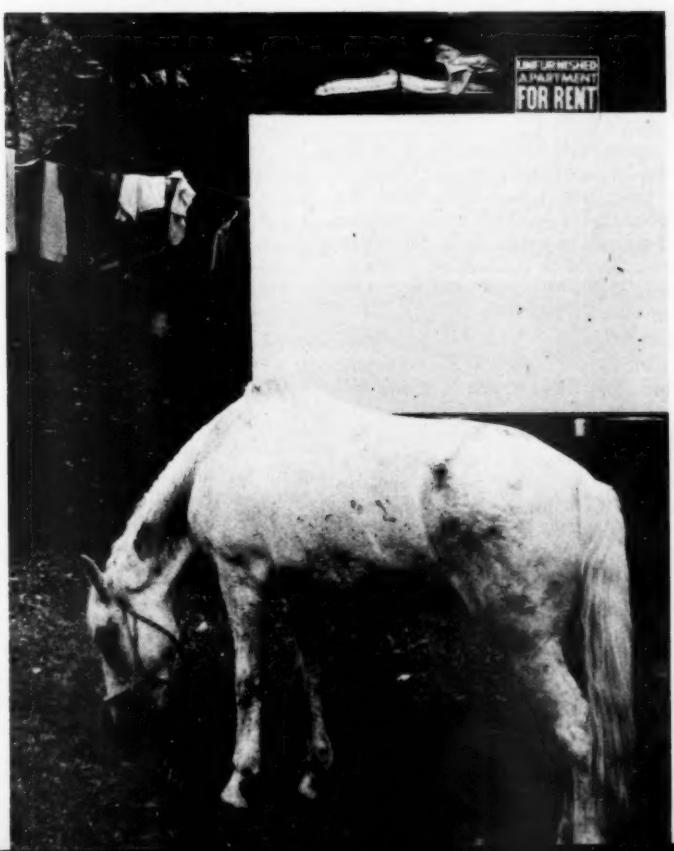
TO THE VOLUNTEER:

"The ambivalent mix . . . it's the nebulous nature of this sharing and loving. We must go about it in our own soft way." With these words Jack Vaughn reflected on his Peace Corps experience. And a beautiful reflection it is.

Several recent articles in THE VOLUNTEER as well as many current discussions have centered around the debate of whether communication and people-to-people relationships or technical aid is what Peace Corps should be all about. I think Peace Corps can and should be both.

Peace Corps can increasingly se-

Life seems idyllic these days at the Virgin Islands Training Center on St. Croix—away from the push-button routine. No whirring washing machine, rumbling air-conditioner or roaring lawn mower needed. And best of all: no housing shortage.



lect the highly motivated, idealistic B.A. generalist who exhibits empathy, responsibility, communication skills and the ability to relate on a people-to-people basis. Then training should prepare the Volunteer to do a specific job that is really needed in the host country. What he needs is specific technical training for a job like tubewell development or poultry; not agriculture, or community development, for these are too broad. Specific training, if thorough, will develop the confidence the trainee needs so that he knows he has something important to offer when he gets overseas; he knows he *can* make a meaningful contribution.

The traits of the successful generalist shouldn't vanish as he acquires technical expertise. Rather they are the personal, private vehicle which can transport "in our own soft way" needed technical skills to people sincerely set on solving their problems.

LARRY RUBLEE

Tikamgarh, India

'A good place to live'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I was pleasantly surprised to read Kevin Kane's letter (June VOLUNTEER), in which he spoke of his experience as a "quasi-staff member" in the Botswana III training program last fall. In response to his comments, I should like to add those of a quasi-trainee in the Botswana III program.

I agree with Kevin on many of the points he mentions. I couldn't believe the logic which said that since the training staff doesn't know the trainees well enough to judge them, the whole matter should be packed off to Washington, where the staff is even further removed from the trainees.

I agree with him that this business of "intellectual conflicts" is pretty stupid. THE VOLUNTEER is chock full of this conflict, none of which has the slightest relation to the job of the Volunteer in country. The photos are the only parts of the "Volunteer Geographic" that make it approach being worthwhile.

As Kevin says, the Peace Corps is a "nice" side of a U.S. foreign policy that many of us deplore. This criticism, though, is its own justification, and I wonder if Kevin really fails to see this.

Finally, even though our "sit-in" last year failed to gain its ends as far as I was concerned, I came to Botswana, not because I cared a damn for the Peace Corps—it's truly not worth worrying about—but because Botswana is a good place to live and work for two years and the Peace Corps is paying me to do it.

I won't make any maudlin comments about Kevin's hope that the Peace Corps dies during the next four years; in a way, it died with President Kennedy. That Peace Corps can never come back, but if Nixon and Blatchford are as business-like as they seem to be, they'll see that another one takes its place.

If the Peace Corps is good, it's only because it shows that the bureaucracy is still willing to subsidize individualism, even if that only comes by chance, once in a while.

DAN DOUGLAS

Gaberones, Botswana

You understand, John?

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I was quite surprised at reading John Rothchild's article in the May VOLUNTEER. What is happening to the Volunteers of today? What has become of the understanding dialogue between Volunteer and host country national? Most important, what has become of the flexibility of the Volunteer to adjust to adverse conditions—the touchstone of a good Volunteer?

Our group went through an experience here in West Bengal similar to those in Ecuador mentioned by Mr. Rothchild. But did that deter us? Oh, no sir! We had a meaningful dialogue with our staff and naturally we realized that it was just a temporary lull. So what if two-thirds of our group left Bengal right after our conference swearing that the next time they come here will be at the head of an armored column with all guns blazing. They were just quitters, right?

So what if the block development officers (our local supervisors) do not want anything to do with us for fear of reprisals from other "brothers" of society. So what if I get insulted and accused of being a CIA spy everytime I ride a train or bus or go to a big town.

However, these are merely cultural differences and if any Volunteer is now experiencing a similar circumstance, he should just be that much more flexible and resourceful and *adjust*. It is a mark of a truly great Volunteer to persevere and smile when faced with problems from your host country "brothers." All that is needed is absolutely no character—this is the greatest virtue that a Volunteer can possess. Most important of all, every prospective Volunteer should be made to memorize the Peace Corps Handbook, carry it with him at all times, and refer to it always. It is not often that such an unenlightened and misinformed publication comes along and, therefore, it should be greatly cherished.

Actually, what prompted me to write this letter was a combination of events. This morning I was "gheraoed" for the second time in two months by some of my host country "brothers." The demonstration in front of my house only lasted a half hour this time and there were only 200 demonstrators. They were also very kind in their inflammatory remarks towards me. They only told me that I was a CIA spy and I should get out. They also told the village people not to collaborate with me. Then in the afternoon, THE VOLUNTEER magazine arrived and I read Mr. Rothchild's article. Try as I might, I just can't understand what he is talking about. So therefore, I am writing to clarify these things for Mr. Rothchild and the rest of Peace Corps. You understand, don't you, John?

BARRY ALTSHULE

Calcutta, India

Less talk, more work

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

In "Less Peace Corps, more James Bond" (May VOLUNTEER), John Rothchild makes the statement: "If the Peace Corps has served any function here, it has been in perpetrating these myths" (that Volunteers are spies, etc.). It appears that he is not really aware of or involved in the grass roots operations of Peace Corps in Ecuador or of what Peace Corps should really be about. It seems to me that Mr. Rothchild has been spending too much time with the "aristocracy of the poor" and not enough time with the rank and file. Nor does it seem that he is aware of some of the constructive, person-to-person work that Volunteers have and are doing in Ecuador. There have been and are Volunteers who

have had more honest and better understood relations with nationals than those Mr. Rothchild mentioned, and there are numerous Ecuadorians who feel that they are the better for having worked with some of these people.

Recently, however, there seems to be an increasing feeling, especially among some of the newer Volunteers, that if one works with host country nationals on any material problem, you are not interested in the person himself. That is, if you help a man grow more food or assist him in earning a better living, you are interested only in material goods and are not only less interested in the man but are demeaning him. In spite of this, many of these same people have a holier-than-thou attitude and a somewhat arrogant aloofness that doesn't coincide with the expressed philosophy.

I quote from the article: ". . . an Ecuadorian law student characterizes Volunteers as cold, in-groupish, unwilling to mix with Ecuadorians and disdainful. . . ." Imagine, then, how a person who is not accustomed to doing much abstract thinking (since he is daily more concerned with problems in his physical existence) might view someone who does no definable work, is aloof, talks primarily about abstractions, has no apparent income, floats about the community, and yet usually has as much money (or more) as he does. Conclusion: The character must be some kind of an agent or spy!

Mr. Rothchild states, "The Volunteer feels a lack of effectiveness. The people do not. They view the problem as a Volunteer's lack of interest . . . or lack of drive (he is lazy, doesn't think we are worth it.)" But why is the Volunteer feeling a lack of effectiveness? In many cases, I would be inclined to agree with the people, because I have seen too many lazy Volunteers and Volunteers who really felt that the people they were supposedly working for or with weren't worth all the time, trouble, and psychological pain and stress that would have been involved if they were to have been effective workers.

I don't think that there is any Volunteer, past or present, (myself included) who could honestly say that he was not guilty of this "lack of effectiveness" to some degree at some time. It seems that the problem is that we often fail to admit our own

Memorandum

TO : The field DATE: August, 1969
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: Traveling in the Peace Corps

What constitutes the "re-entry crisis" is a subject Peace Corps philosophers have been debating for years. A Volunteer in Afghanistan has come up with a new answer—at least for the girls. Her plaintive reckoning is recorded in the following S.O.S. she sent to the Technical Resources Division at Peace Corps headquarters: "This letter is speaking for myself but I am sure it echos the feelings of my fellow female Volunteers. I will be leaving here to return home in three months and I have gained almost the traditional 20 lbs. Dieting is a horror but exercises are worse. What I am requesting is a small pamphlet with exercises for overweight females (or the address where I could quickly get one). This would be of tremendous help to the morale—if it works."

□ □ □

Language-wise, Thailand Volunteer Richard Davis is one in about 1300. He is the first Volunteer—of all the Volunteers and staff who have served in Thailand—to score a "5" ("educated native speaker" in Foreign Service Institute terms) in spoken Thai. Davis, who has been teaching English in Nan, Northern Thailand, for four years, scored a "4" in spoken Northern Thai last year.

□ □ □

No matter what your faith, religion and bus riding are completely compatible in Iran, according to Volunteer Jim Belcher who writes of an in-country trip in Iran's Volunteer magazine, *Sholuq Nameh*. He describes the "take-off": "The departure of an Iranian bus is an especially moving experience, what with the benediction in Arabic and all. I don't consider myself overly religious, but there's something about departing that urges me to cross myself on the sly. I can't explain it rationally; all I can say is there's no such thing as an atheist in an Iranian bus."

□ □ □

Colorful "beach buggies" are a common sight in the Virgin Islands, but Peace Corps trainer Gerard C. DeBalyon's psychedelic auto does the buggies one better. Islanders and tourists alike stop to stare as DeBalyon streaks (slowly) by on his way to, as he puts it, "the closest beach" via "the smoothest road." The reason for the careful pace: riding is as shocking as looking. But DeBalyon, a French citizen of Mauritius who taught language and coordinated technical studies for a recent group of Guinea mechanics trainees, was rewarded by his "students" at the end of training. They presented him with a new set of shock absorbers, installed by them.

limitations (lack of interest, drive, or knowledge of how to do any type of interpersonal work) much less face up to the challenges of interpersonal work. So instead of going out and doing anything, we sit around with our peers and philosophize, thus making talk our goal.

That is why I don't agree with Mr. Rothchild that the problems he discusses "may be solved by honest dialogue about our images of each other and why they don't reach." I think it is quite egotistical to presume that the typical Ecuadorian laborer or campesino has so much time and effort to devote to the problem of our images of each other and why we gringos are emotionally uncomfortable, when he, himself, is often worried about how he will clothe and feed his family.

If anything constructive is to result, we had better spend more time honestly and humbly listening to *him*, the typical Juan Campesino, and *his* problems, and finding *with him* if we can (or want to) help him with them. Honest dialogue isn't enough, but honest and humble work with host country nationals in addition to dialogue might produce some "real understanding" as well as other results.

NORMAN HOFFMAN
Former Volunteer and staff member, Ecuador
Valmeyer, Ill.

A two-way street

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I enjoyed reading the article "Less Peace Corps, more James Bond" by John Rothchild (May VOLUNTEER), and agree that exposure to the Latin American culture makes a person less "starry-eyed." Mr. Rothchild does not believe in the premise that personal communications leads to increased emotional closeness and understanding between peoples—as evidenced by his experience in Ecuador. Instead, a Volunteer should adapt himself to the preconceptions and misconceptions harbored in the labyrinths of host country nationals' minds.

This is where I take issue with Mr. Rothchild, for he makes the fundamental mistake of confusing fact with idea. The idea that the gringo is no more than a rich patron and "thus unsuited to live in poverty" is a tough pill to swallow. But the fact remains that the rich patron gringo still lives in the "comfortable mud hut" and although he does not lose his former wealth, at least in spirit he becomes equal.

This should not be discounted lightly, as Volunteer credibility is enhanced by living with host country nationals.

Some blame goes to Mr. Rothchild and Peace Corps Ecuador for the faulty establishment of community credibility. He mentioned that an Ecuadorian law student characterized Volunteers there as "cold, in-groupish, unwilling to mix with Ecuadorians, and disdainful." He then focused attention on the misconception of that same law student when he associated Peace Corps Volunteers with CIA agents. What Mr. Rothchild glaringly omitted was a defense against the charge. It seems then that the blame is rightfully due Mr. Rothchild and his compadres if they are "cold."

Association can work both ways. If you associate with Latins and their ideas, you lessen your gringo points and bolster their confidence. You might argue you are selling out by turning native. But aren't you in Latin America two years to learn; and if so, then avail yourself of the opportunities.

Recently I was plunking around on my *guitara espanola* and a host country national dropped in. He said he played, so I gave him the guitar and he proceeded to teach me the song "Greenfields," an American folk song made popular by The Brothers Four. The lesson ended, and as he was leaving he said: "*Nosotros somos vecinos*" (We are neighbors.) What he meant simply was that both of us could learn in this experience.

DAVID JORDAN
Santa Rita de Copan, Honduras

Expanding our image

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Peace Corps advertising is excellently done, but I feel it is too limited.

Volunteers are usually pictured in some remote environment, surrounded by poor, local people. It is true that many, if not the majority, of Peace Corps jobs fit this stereotype, but there are many that do not. There are Volunteers presently working in situations where they deal almost entirely with middle class nationals in various agencies. Others are in big cities where conditions prevent getting to know the people as easily as one might in a rural site. Many live in housing with running water, electricity and other conveniences.

If the Peace Corps would expand the images it projects to include the variations mentioned, then I feel it would be doing a service to future Volunteers. It would show them the greater number of possibilities and save them from being disappointed if they one day find themselves as Volunteers working in a big city with middle class people and not in a rural site surrounded by the poor.

CATHE DONHAM
Kingston, Jamaica

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